S N 563 182 II. Stability of the Societies in the Northwest

It is safe to say that the minorities of Sinkiang, Chinghai and Kansu represent rather unstable societies. This instability has several causes. The first is certainly the fact that the Turks, the Mongols and the Tibetans consider themselves utterly different from the Chinese in regard to race, religion, language, and ethnic grouping; therefore they desire independence and do not want to be ruled by "aliens," which they consider the Chinese to be. The second reason for instability is the progressive settling and colonization by Chinese peasants who cut down the pasture areas of the nomadic Mongols, Turks, and Tibetans, and consequently provoke hatred against themselves. The third reason for the unstable character of the societies of the Northwest was the reckless taxation of the minorities by many Chinese officials who considered their offices in areas like Sinkiang and Chinghai as an opportunity to gain wealth while holding those offices for a limited number of years. In periods of wars, the minorities were subject to merciless requisition of their cattle and agricultural products. In addition to the friction and animosity between the minorities and the Chinese, the disunion among the minorities themselves was at times considerable. As an illustration one might remember that during the uprisings of the Dungans between 1931 and 1936, the Chinese Muslims fought against Turkic Muslims (which supposedly represent a single religious unit), Mongols, Chinese, and White Russians fought against the Chinese Muslims (Dungans) and the Kirghiz and Kazakhs even formed a special unit and fought against both groups or joined one of the two according to the military situation, opportunistically. This period was without doubt the culmination of disunion and confusion among minorities of the Northwest during the last decades.

On the other hand, when a governor who was more interested in the welfare of the country as such than in his own enrichment, like Sheng Si-ts'ai of Sinkiang with a cleaner officialdom, ruled the province, the society gave a more stable impression and the frictions between the various nationalities decreased.

A further reason for the disunion of the society in the Northwest is the incompatibility of various religions, especially the "martial" Islam on the one hand and the more peaceful Buddhism on the other. The Muslims feel superior to any other religious community; the Buddhists (Mongols, Tibetans, Shera Yögurs, Monguors) consider the Muslims as having a barbarian religion; the Chinese, generous and tolerant in regard to religions consider at least Islam to be somewhat inferior to their own multi-religious conceptions and beliefs.

/Chinese Moslems (Dungans)/

S N 563 183 709 431 (651) religious teachings. According to the religious code it is obligatory for a man of means to contribute a certain amount of his wealth to public charity. Next to worship, this is the most important duty in Moslem society. The original idea of helping the poor and needy evolved into a tax (ten per cent on agricultural produce and two and one-half per cent on animals) collected from all believers for religious and public welfare purposes. Another form of alms, the sadaqa, is a voluntary offering. Public welfare supported by the tax, after the collector's fee is deducted, includes freeing slaves, assistance to persons who became indebted for good reason, making holy war to defend the people and the faith, and aiding needy travelers.

S N 563 796 935 During the month of Ramadan (fasting) donations and offerings are collected for public welfare purposes. The amount is not fixed, and the act of giving is voluntary. A sense of public responsibility is strong among these people. Not only do they give regular allowances to the needy in their own communities, but they help needy outsiders of their own faith.

S N 563 788 554 The Hajjis, or those who have completed the pilgrimage to Mecca, are highly respected in the Moslem community, and wear special badges to mark their distinction. The opportunity to journey to Mecca is the dream of all Moslems.

c. Virtue

S N 563 577 779 It is important for the individual to cultivate the true concept of peace and submission. The concept of peace involves such ideals as mutual cooperation and aid among mankind, mutual understanding among religions and peaceful co-existence of nations to achieve world brotherhood. The concept of submission means to submit oneself wholly to Allah and follow his teachings, sacrificing self-interest for the promotion of happiness for mankind.

S N 563 515 Personal cleanliness, both internal and external, is most important. Cleanliness in eating habits and personal hygiene is thought to develop a clean soul, free of evil thoughts and immoral conduct.

S N 563 186 d. Racial superiority

The Chinese Moslems regard themselves as a special group, superior to their Chinese neighbors. As students and officials, their attitude toward respect for the emperor and for Confucius has, in the past, been one of compromise. Compelled by law to conform, they excused themselves on the grounds that they did so outwardly but not in their hearts. The old and the new sects of Chinese Moslems, although bitterly hostile toward each other and at times engaged in armed conflict, on the whole present a united front toward the Chinese and the rest of the world. S N (798)

795 668 The demands of the natives of Sinkiang for independence were accentuated in the 1930's by the introduction of pan-Islamic ideals from India. These ideals for a union of Moslem peoples which transcends national boundaries, fired the imagination of the Turkic peoples of Sinkiang and bolstered their nationalistic aspirations. As they served to mobilize Turkestanian nationalists to oppose Nationalist rule in the 1940's, so they have inspired Turkestanian resistance against the Communists since 795 668 1949. In speeches and in publications, the Communist leaders have vehemently denounced pan-Islam as a major obstacle to the policy of bringing the native peoples of Turkestan into the "great 177 family of nationalities" of Communist China.

Perhaps, because pan-Islam is still an incohate movement, having attractive and high-sounding goals but not the organization and strength to achieve these goals, the Chinese Communists, despite their denunciation of it, have not regarded it as a great threat in comparison to that of other religions, like, for example, the Roman Catholic Church, which have external ties. Consequently, in the first years of Communist rule, they proclaimed a policy of benevolence toward the Moslems largely for the propaganda value of such a policy.

A number of Moslem fellow-travelers readily responded, and other Moslem leaders, out of self-interest, also acquiesced to the Communists. Still others hoped to carry on even under the narrow restrictions imposed upon them by the Communist government. The majority of the Moslem peoples of the Northwest, learning from the experience of their co-religionists in Soviet Central Asia, have evolved a way of life which is to live in the Communist world without becoming a part of it. Privately, they still regard themselves as belonging to the Moslem world.

795 798 668 177 A large number of the Moslems in Chinese Turkestan, following the militant tradition of their forefathers, chose to resist the Communists, and the Communists treated them, not as Moslems, but as counter-revolutionaries. Consequently, while proclaiming their policy of benevolence toward the Moslems, a policy reserved for only those who submit, the Communists also carried out a violent program of persecution. As soon as they entered Sinkiang in 1949, the first act of the Chinese Communists was to undermine the influence of the Moslem clergy. A number of religious institutions were closed, and the landed property of the clergy—the waqf—were confiscated. Chinese 692 Communist judges took over the judicial functions of the qadi and the people's courts took over the handling of criminal and civil cases, while the so-claimed cultural cadres assumed the guidance of the daily life of the people. The local branches of the China Islamic Association and other mass organizations supplanted the leadership of the Moslem clergy. With institution of

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civil marriage, marriage and divorce ceased to be an important function administered by the qadi.

Thousands of religious scholars and intellectuals, denounced as counter-revolutionaries, were arrested. The people's courts tried some thirty thousand Moslems, sentencing some to death and others to life imprisonment. Soviet forces were reported to have joined the Chinese Communist troops in suppressing the anti-Communist uprisings, in which it is estimated that 130,000 Moslems were slaughtered, 260,000 sentenced to forced labor and 150,000 fled from Sinkiang. [Figures based on Hikmah (Indonesian weekly), July 23, 1955, in Missionary Bulletin, January, 1954, and report of Mochtar Gazali, member of the Executive Council of the Federation of Indonesian Moslem Labor, in Missionary Bulletin, July 1953.]

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But the persecutions have failed to wipe out opposition from large segments of the Moslem population. As late as the spring of 1956, it was still charged that "counter-revolutionaries" were hiding in religious circles and "under the cloak of religion they carried out various kinds of destructive activities." (Report of Su Chen-yung, vice director of the Bureau of Public Security, Kansu People's Government, in Kansu jih-pao, March 15, 1956.)

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B. Lamaism

As was the case with Islam, the present regime has also tried to placate Lamaism as a device to attract the loyalties of the Lamaistic peoples, the Mongols and the Tibetans. Famous Lama temples were kept in a good state of repair, Lamaist priests and dignitaries received subvention and a certain restraint was shown toward interfering with strictly religious practices (for details see IMAR Handbook, Religion). More particularly, the two highest priests of Tibetan Lamaism, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, both 'teen-agers, by the way, were kept at Peking for long periods of time and shown around at international gatherings.

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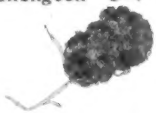
Attitudes toward Lamaism as a religion and an institution differ somewhat in the Mongolian and the Tibetan contexts. Generally speaking, it can be said that among the Mongols the influence of Lamaism was on the wane. Even among those Mongols who stuck to their traditions and maintained loyalty to their princes, there was a tendency to break loose gradually from the leading-strings of the Lamaseries. Already in pre-Communist times, progressive Mongols supported this movement. The Regent of the Alashan Mongols, for instance, had made it a rule to submit Lama novices to compulsory secular education and military training in order to educate them out of Lamaism. No reports are available on how Mongolian Lamas have reacted to



/Chinese, Chinese Moslems and Sedentary Tibetans/

because there is nothing for which to exchange it. Once a week a caravan carrying Government supplies deposits a bag of flour at the door. This is the subsidy granted to them, in exchange of which her husband is bound to be at his post all through the year, and keep the well from being choked by sand. She has never thought in terms which refer to anything except meals, births and occasionally deaths. Her boys may go farther afield, and if they do, she knows that they will never return, but after a time she will become accustomed to their absence and it will not trouble her again."

With spiritual senses dormant, mental powers arrested and physical demands reduced to the minimum, wherein shall a human being show that he differs from the beasts whose conditions he shares? There is hardly anything which can be called attitudes or reactions.

About the Chinese-speaking Moslems Miss Cable reports that Chinese travelers avoid any inn operated by Moslems because of the rudeness to which they may be subjected when using it. This is a very particular observation, as in other places in the Northwest, non-Moslem Chinese prefer to go to Mohammedan restaurants, which are famed for their cleanliness and tasty food. In many places Moslems have monopolized the innkeeper business, so that they cannot possibly be avoided. Even the Chinese guests abstain from eating pork during their stay, every pot and pan which they possess is considered unclean and will not be allowed inside the kitchen. This is not conducive to good feeling between host and guest, and may at any time lead to high words and even to blows. Toward known westerners the Moslems' attitude is somewhat different, and more tolerant. Cable records the experience of her party in staying in an inn with the sign of "Pure and True Religion" by saying, "The attitude toward our party was different because, though we were styled kaper (infidel) we were known to keep a 'clean' kitchen, which is to say that pork, lard, and every produce of the pig was rigidly excluded from our menu. We were 'infidels of the book' for the Bible and not the Koran was our guide, but we were not 'infidels of the pig' which was an insult reserved for eaters of unclean food. The closest watch was kept upon us as we journeyed, and any lapse or laxity would have been reported to every mosque on our route, so that 'pure religion' inns would have been closed to us. Moslems acknowledged that we were as free from idolatry as themselves, but openly stigmatized us as blasphemers, for we called the prophet Jesus 'Son of God', and the innkeeper turned aside to spit whenever he heard the word." (pp. 72-73). The Moslems who are of means like to make others understand that they are wealthy people. "Like other Tungan landlords to whose houses we had the entree, he left us with a sense that he was very wealthy and that his

175 counter-revolutionary activities." He said that they were carrying
668 on "rumor spreading, sabotage, and the deception of the masses in
669 an attempt to undermine our revolutionary unity." (Sinkiang jih-
578 pao, February 25, 1955). Consequently, he went on, only "legal"
795 religious activities would be permitted by the people's government.
• [798] By spring of 1956, as the heavy hand of Communist rule was
668 intensified, the counter-revolutionary activities of the people also
669 increased. Su Chen-yung, deputy director of the Bureau of Public
578 Security in the Kansu People's government, revealed the extent of popular unrest in the Northwest when he said: "The counter-revolutionaries have unceasingly waged their destructive activities against the socialist transformation enterprises in both the cities and the countryside. With the purpose of impeding the work of peasants joining the cooperatives and sabotaging the agricultural production, they concentrated on certain reactionary landowners, wealthy peasants and Taoist leaders to cheat backward elements into establishing false cooperatives and even organizing uprisings. Counter-revolutionaries hidden in factories, mines, and basic construction projects resort to such base acts as sabotaging technical reforms, stealing government secrets, and purposely committing errors of work in order to proceed with their destructive activities. Counter-revolutionaries also hid themselves in religious circles. Under the cloak of religion, they proceeded upon various kinds of destructive activities." (Kansu jih-pao, March 18, 1956).

This revelation of popular opposition to Communist rule almost six years after its establishment in the Northwest shows that the age-old conflicts of culture and ideology, which in the past have divided the region, and the stubborn recalcitrance of the people, which makes government difficult, still remain despite the efforts of the Chinese Communists in centralization and domination, in indoctrination and repression, which were unprecedented in their severity and ruthlessness. The divisive nature of the region and the discontent of the people are intrinsic conditions and cardinal factors in the political life of China's Northwest. Even the Communists themselves, in their public statements, have candidly acknowledged the difficulties and foresee greater resistance from the people as the program for socialism gets under way.